



Plenary sitting

B8-0469/2016

12.4.2016

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 135 of the Rules of Procedure

on Honduras, the situation of human rights defenders
(2016/2648(RSP))

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on behalf of the ECR Group

B8-0469/2016

European Parliament resolution on Honduras, the situation of human rights defenders (2016/2648(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the local declaration of the EU delegation and the embassies of the Member States on the death of human rights defender Berta Cáceres of 2 March 2016,
 - having regard to the statement of the EEAS Spokesperson on the follow up of the death of Berta Cáceres in Honduras of 12 March 2016,
 - having regard to the local declaration of the EU delegation and the embassies of the Member States on the death of COPINH leader Nelson García of 16 March 2016,
 - having regard to the EU-Central America Association Agreement,
 - having regard to UN Human Rights Council resolution 31/32 of 24 March 2016 on Protecting human rights defenders addressing economic, social and cultural rights,
 - having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas in March 2016 Berta Cáceres and Nelson García, two human rights defenders and leaders of the Civic Council of Popular Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH) were murdered;
- B. whereas these cases are the most high-profile killings within a growing trend in the murder, violence and intimidation of human rights defenders in Honduras, particularly those promoting rights related to environment and land issues;
- C. whereas Ms. Cáceres is one of the 15 human rights defenders who have been killed in Honduras despite being beneficiaries of precautionary measures from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR);
- D. whereas between 2010 and 2015, at least 109 environmental activists were killed in Honduras, a higher death toll relative to population than anywhere else;
- E. whereas the Mesoamerican Initiative of Women Human Rights Defenders has documented 318 attacks against women human rights defenders in Honduras between 2012 and 2014, including seven murders in the same period, one in 2015 and three in 2016;
- F. whereas this shows the high level of impunity in Honduras;
- G. whereas the EEAS Spokesperson highlighted in his statement of 12 March 2016 the need of a "transparent yet expedite investigation";

- H. whereas the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Michel Frost, stated on 18 March 2016 that "this cycle of violence will only stop when impunity is addressed and perpetrators of such attacks are put to justice";
- I. whereas resolution 31/32 of the UN Human Rights Council provides guidance to States as to obligations and good practices in the protection of human rights defenders, including developing specific human rights defender protection laws and mechanisms, and investigating and ensuring accountability for attacks and reprisals against them;
- J. whereas the Dutch development bank FMO and Finnfund have suspended disbursements to the Agua Zarca dam project, of which Berta Cáceres was a leading opponent;
1. Notes with concern and strongly denounces the increasing attacks and the criminalisation of individuals and communities who engage in the defense of human rights, including land rights, in the context of investment projects (hydroelectric, mining, mono-culture, etc.) in Honduras, as a form of intimidation to their work;
 2. Denounces the Honduran authorities' lack of will to implement and enforce the protection measures for human rights defenders, such as the precautionary measures granted by the IACHR that Berta Cáceres was benefiting from since June 29, 2009;
 3. Urges the Honduran Government to:
 - ensure a rapid and effective decrease in violence and the provision of safe conditions for human rights defenders,
 - invite and fully cooperate with an independent international investigation of Berta Cáceres and Nelson Garcia's murders, led by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights,
 - comply with the precautionary measures granted by the IACHR;
 - make a public commitment to protect human rights defenders, refrain from any form of criminalization of human rights defenders, and advance on the regulation and implementation of the mechanism for the protection of human rights defenders;
 4. Insists that Honduran judicial authorities carry out their duties to effectively and promptly investigate Berta Cáceres and Nelson Garcia's murders, in cooperation with the international investigation, while pursuing the intellectual and material authors and guaranteeing due process and access to justice;
 5. Asks HR/VP Mogherini to ensure that the EU delegation in Honduras, together with the embassies of the Member States, actively monitors the processes around the investigation of the murder of Berta Cáceres and Nelson Garcia, in line with the EU guidelines on human rights defenders;
 6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and of Honduras.

